

Handout No. 1-10

Published: 1/08/02

Revised: 11/4/04

Solar Hot Water Heaters & Photovoltaic Systems

Permits & Plan Review Required

Building, Plumbing and Electrical permits are required for all solar installations. Building permits are not required for roof installations that do not exceed any of the following criteria.

1. Total panel weight (including frame) is greater than 5 lbs. per square foot.
2. Maximum concentrated load at each point of support exceeds 40 lbs.
3. Maximum height above roof surface exceeds 18 inches.

If a Building permit is required, a plan must be submitted showing existing roof framing and any proposed elements or alterations needed along panel support and bracing systems with attendant structural design verifying the capacity of framing elements and connections to support additional loads. For installations that do not require a Building permit, connection of the panels must be made to structural members of the roof in conformance with applicable codes and manufacturer's recommendation. Structural members consist of roof rafters, roof trusses, purlins or blocking. Plywood sheathing and spaced sheathing are not considered as structural members. All roof penetrations must be water tight.

Plumbing Plan Review is required for hot water solar systems for multi-family, commercial and industrial installations.

Electrical Plan Review for photovoltaic systems is required for all multi-family, commercial and industrial installations. Electrical Plan Review for single family and duplex installations will be offered, if requested, by the applicant or may be required by the Building Official based on complexity of installation.

Required Permits and Fee Criteria

| Solar Unit Type | Trade | Building Use | Permit Fee Criteria | Plan Check |
|-------------------------|--------------|---------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Hot Water Solar Systems | Plumbing | All Uses | One inspection | Based on Hourly Rate |
| | Building | All Uses | Contract Valuation | Based on Hourly Rate |

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|--------------|------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Photovoltaic | Electrical | Single Family & Duplexs | One inspection | Based on Hourly Rate |
| | Electrical | Multi Fam/Com /Ind | More than One inspection | Based on Hourly Rate |
| | Building | All Uses | Contract Valuation | Based on Hourly Rate |

Development Taxes are not assessed, effective 9-28-01 thru 12-31-06, due to the tax exemption granted by Ordinance Number 46465.

Planning Permit Requirements

Planning Site Adjustment Permits are required for commercial or industrial buildings and for residential buildings over two units, single family residence and duplex do not require planning review. Planning adjustment permits can be obtained from planning staff assigned to the Building Division or from Planning Division. For general Planning permit information please contact the Planning Division at 535-3555.

Additional information can be obtained by visiting our website at www.sanjoseca.gov/building ,or by calling our Information Inspector's voice mail at (408) 535-3555 and leaving a detailed message. In addition you may visit the Building Division in City Hall at 200 East Santa Clara St. Our hours are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with limited service between 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m.